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instructions that incidental charges should be kept down at the minimum by avoiding unnecessary movements and handling."

Supply of rice in Malabar and Nilgiris.

* 347 *Q.*—SRI P. K. GOPALAKRISHNAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) the quota of rice allocated by the Centre for distribution in Malabar and Nilgiris where ration shops are still maintained;

(*b*) the price at which rice is so supplied by the Centre; and

(*c*) whether the Government are actually distributing the rice in Malabar at this price and if not the reason therefor?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (*a*) Two lakhs tons of rice.

" (*b*) The Government of India are supplying rice to this State from various sources such as Overseas, and other States in the Union, e.g., Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. The prices of the rice supplied varies of from source to source and approximately ranges between Rs. 31 per maund for Overseas rice, Rs. 23 for Uttar Pradesh rice, Rs. 19 for Madhya Pradesh rice and Rs. 18–6–0 per maund for Orissa rice.

" (*c*) No. The Government are not distributing rice at the rates mentioned in the answer to clause (*b*) above in any part of the State including Malabar. With effect from 1st February 1953 the Government have fixed uniform pool prices for rice to the wholesalers throughout the State on a ' no loss, no profit ' basis, taking into account the total quantity of rice available for distribution in the State during this year (imported stocks as well as locally procured) and the total cost thereof. If the price of rice obtained from the Government of India alone is taken into consideration the price will be higher than the pool price now fixed."

Price of rice in Malabar.

* 348 *Q.*—SRI K. P. GOPALAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(*a*) the present rate at which rice and paddy are sold in the fair price shops in Malabar;

(*b*) whether there has been increase in that price recently; and

(*c*) if so, the reasons for the same?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (*a*) The average retail issue price of rice supplied through ration shops in Malabar is Rs. 22–12–6 per imperial maund for I sort and Rs. 21–5–8 per imperial maund for II sort. The price of paddy is not reported, as it is not supplied.

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"(*b*) Yes. There has been a slight increase in February as compared with the prices in January 1953.

"(*c*) From 1st February 1953 the Government have revised the selling price of rice throughout the State. They have fixed a pool price for all rice imported from different sources and the rice locally procured based upon actual cost of purchase. The pool price so fixed, including transport charges and incidentals from station of import to the stage of distribution by retailers works out roughly to Rs. 22–8–0 per maund of rice I sort and Rs. 18–12–0 per maund of rice II sort. However, in the case of districts like Malabar which are in a corner of the State, the transport charges from sources of import like Madhya Pradesh and Orissa are bound to be high. Sometimes sea transport is resorted to for movements from the circar districts and this is costlier than transport by rail. Further, to prevent breakdown in rationing it often becomes necessary to make internal transport of rice from one Society to another, transport charges being high in a hilly district like Malabar. These too result in an enhancement of the selling price. The slight increase in the selling price of I and II sort rice is due to these factors. The Government have already issued strict instructions that movements should be restricted as far as possible so that the consumers' price is not unduly enhanced. They are again instructing the Collector of Malabar to see that adequate stocks are moved in the first instance to each centre of consumption and that unnecessary movements within the district are avoided."

SRI P. K. GOPALAKRISHNAN :—" Sir, the Hon. Minister was telling us that there has been a slight increase in the price of rice supplied by ration shops in Malabar. The price of rice supplied in ration shops three months ago was 9 annas 3 pies per adangazhi —which is equal to half a Madras measure—but the price now is 12 annas 6 pies and the increase is almost 34 per cent. Is this 'slight increase'?"

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—"I was comparing the price prevailing in January and February and I said there had been a slight increase from January to February."

SRI P. K. GOPALAKRISHNAN :—" Sir, it is a very big trick; because, the price was gradually being increased during the months of November, December, January and February. The price of rice supplied in ration shops in November was 9 annas 3 pies per adangazhi or half a Madras measure, while now the price is 12 annas 6 pies. This is 35 per cent increase, and it is not a 'slight increase'; in fact it is a very heavy increase."

MR. SPEAKER :—" The hon. Member is arguing his question."

SRI P. K. GOPALAKRISHNAN :—" I am putting the question, Sir, whether this is a 'slight increase' or a 'heavy increase'."

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Sir, formerly we were being subsidized as far as overseas rice was concerned and we

were getting at the pool price of Rs. 23 per maund, but now overseas rice costs us Rs. 31 per maund or about 35 per cent more than the price at which we were getting it, and this has certainly to be borne by the consumers. That is why the increase. We cannot afford to subsidize for Malabar alone, and even if we do subsidize at the rate of Rs. 2 per maund, Malabar alone will cost us a crore of rupees.''

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—'' Sir, what is the likely loss to the Government if a reversion is made to the price level of 1943 as required by the hon. Member? '' 9 a.m.

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—'' He wants 1946 level and if we revert to that level in the case of Malabar alone we have to pay one to one and a half crores of rupees.''

SRI V. V. RAMASAMI :—'' Sir, may I know the percentage of deficit to Malabar alone compared with the entire State? ''

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—'' We are procuring from internal sources 2½ lakhs tons; we are getting another 2½ lakhs tons from the Centre having been allotted from overseas rice and from other States and out of this 2 lakhs tons will go to Malabar.''

SRI P. RAMAMURTHI :—'' Sir, what is the method of fixing pool price? Is the pool price fixed at the beginning of the year or is it fixed month after month or from time to time? ''

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—'' We have fixed it for the whole year from 1st February 1953 and if there is any variation we will have to change it. I am hoping that I will be able to make a favourable price change very soon, because it is reported we may be able to get a greater quantity from Orissa which is the cheapest source compared to other sources.''

SRI P. RAMAMURTHI :—'' Will the Hon. Minister please tell us what proportion of the 2½ lakhs tons of rice that is coming from the Centre is overseas rice and what proportion is internally procured rice? ''

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—'' One-third is from overseas, Sir.''

SRI K. C. GOPALAN UNNI :—'' Sir, the agricultural season in Malabar is just beginning and due to the failure of crops last year the labourers are paid in cash only and so, as a special case will the Government be pleased to supply paddy to the labourers of Malabar at least at a reduced rate during the next two months? ''

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—'' Unfortunately, we cannot distinguish between labourers and the other sections of the population in the district, but anyhow I am trying my best to reduce the price in Malabar and I may be able to make some statement if the Assembly is in session some time later.''

SRI T. C. NARAYANA NAMBIAR :—'' Sir, the Hon. Minister was saying that there were various difficulties and of course, I am not unsympathetic to the difficulties of the State Government. But

my point here is that in view of the naked fact that more than 50 per cent of the people of Malabar are not in a position to purchase even this meagre ration on the ground that their purchasing power has completely gone down, in view of the fact that there is great unemployment prevailing in the country, in view of the fact that Malabar people are very sadly having the reminiscences of 1943 cholera and also in view of the fact that the rainy season is fast approaching, will the Hon. Minister be kind enough to see that at least the poor people who are unemployed and starving are given food? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Unfortunately these conditions are not confined to Malabar alone and every other hon. Member may also give so many ' in views '. But, the point is whether we will be able to subsidise and to what extent we will be able to subsidise. So far as Malabar is concerned, the question is whether we can make any distinction between area and area. As I have already told the hon. Member, the matter is under the consideration of the Government."

SRI P. RAMAMURTHI :—" I am afraid, Sir, I have to be a bit explanatory in putting the question. The Hon. Minister told us that one-third of the rice that is supplied by the Centre is from foreign sources. Therefore, of the total quantity of rice available for distribution, hardly 15 per cent would be rice got from foreign sources. And the increase in price of this foreign rice is from Rs. 23 to Rs. 31 or 35 per cent. If the price of one-sixth of the total quantity of rice that is available for distribution is increased by 35 per cent, how is it that the price of all the rice that is supplied in ration shops, as a whole, is increased by about 33 per cent? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Only the price of overseas rice has been increased. Other sources like Orissa and Madhya Pradesh have put up prices. Orissa was originally charging only Rs. 15 per maund and it has now gone up to Rs. 18 and odd. Madhya Pradesh was charging Rs. 14 in 1951 and Rs. 15 in 1952 and now Madhya Pradesh rice costs Rs. 23 per maund. So, taking all these things into consideration we have worked out that the first sort rice costs Rs. 20 and odd. I am prepared to place the figures before the hon. Leader of the Opposition and he may find out whether the arithmetic is correct or not."

SRI V. V. RAMASAMI :—" Sir, in view of the fact that Malabar district alone accounts for nearly 40 per cent of the deficit in the entire State and also in view of the fact that the Central Government get large income from taxes and from dollar exchange from commercial crops that are grown in Malabar, will the Government of Madras impress on the Centre to give a special subsidy to feed the Malabar district alone? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" I am sorry that it is not possible to show special consideration for subsidising a

particular district. The representatives of Malabar in the Union Parliament may take up this issue and if necessary press it on the Government of India."

SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" Sir, are the Government aware that because the grains are not stored in places where they are wanted and on account of indiscriminate transport, the grains after a circuit in the whole district, come to the same source and are sold for 50 per cent extra price? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" We have taken note of this defect and we are now seeing that they are stored in proper places so that they may be distributed to places where they are wanted."

SRI S. RAMALINGAM :—" Sir, the Hon. Minister was saying that the Government are paying a higher price for the rice they are getting from the Centre. Will the Government consider the question of increasing the procurement price in the Madras State so that they can get more rice from the State itself and also increase the quota of supply in fair price shops? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" It will further increase the pool price and I am afraid it cannot be done. Though the people of Malabar are asking for more food, they are not prepared to take wheat and I am told that any wheat that is sent to Malabar gets deteriorated because nobody is prepared to purchase it and I would request hon. Members from Malabar to help the Government by popularising wheat in Malabar."

SRI R. KRISHNAN :—" Sir, considering the drought condition and the large scale unemployment in Malabar which has come to the notice of the Government now, will the Government which is mainly responsible to the people of the State consider reduction in price to the pre-decontrol level? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" I have already answered this question. It is now put in a different form."

SRI S. RAMALINGAM :—" Sir, I wanted to know whether the Government will consider the question of paying the same price which they are paying to the Centre for the rice they are getting from overseas and from other States, to the rice procured in the Madras State so that they can procure more rice in the State itself and also issue a greater quota through fair price shops? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" If payment of higher cost would increase the quantity of rice that is available here, I am prepared to do it, but whether the price we may pay, the quantity that is available is the same."

SRI V. BALAKRISHNAN :—" Sir, is the difference in price between Malabar and non-Malabar area so wide as to be an irritant, an intolerable irritant? "

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Certainly not; it depends upon the mental attitude of the Member concerned."

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Dr. K. B. MENON :—" Sir, may we know what efforts the Government are making to popularize wheat in Malabar so that Members may co-operate with the Government? "

The Hon. Sri C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" We are making it available in fair price shops, but unfortunately the complaint is, no fair price shop-keeper is prepared to keep it because nobody purchases it. We had very sad experience of the wheat having been allowed to deteriorate and become completely useless. Hon. Members may popularise wheat by carrying on propaganda among people and telling them to purchase it, because it is cheap and good food."

Sri P. K. GOPALAKRISHNAN :—" Sir, last year during the debate on the food policy, the Hon. Minister was saying that Malabar was being allotted two lakhs tons of rice and that the price would be about Rs. 18 per maund and that for another half a lakh ton of rice which they supplied to other parts of the State the price would be Rs. 30 or so. So, when the Hon. Minister was then prepared to make a distinction in the price of rice for Malabar, now he says that no special consideration will be shown to Malabar. Will the Hon. Minister go through his own speech and give special consideration for Malabar now? "

The Hon. Sri C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" I made that statement on the promises then made by the Central Government, but unfortunately the Finance Department of the Central Government stood in the way and they have now come to the decision that there will be no subsidy at all, so much so, we are now allotted this rice at cost price."

Repairs to Marutla tank in Kuderu firka, Anantapur taluk.

* 349 *Q.*—Sri K. V. VEMA REDDI (on behalf of Sri S. Narayanappa): Will the Hon. the Minister for Public Works be pleased to state—

(*a*) how much has been provided for the repairs of Marutla tank work in Kuderu firka (Anantapur taluk) in the year 1952–53;

(*b*) why the work has not been taken up for execution in 1952–53; and the reasons for its delay; and

(*c*) when the work will be taken up and when it will be finished?

The Hon. Sri N. RANGA REDDI :—" (*a*) Nil.

" (*b*) The proposals have not yet been finalised and the scheme has not therefore been sanctioned.

" (*c*) It cannot be said now whether the scheme will be taken up or finished."

9–10 a.m. Sri PILLALAMARRI VENKATESWARLU :—" When were the proposals brought to the notice of the Government? "

The Hon. Sri N. RANGA REDDI :—" In December 1945."